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ADDRESS

*Written by W. H. Wells Esq. &
Amended by C. S. Layton & G. B. P.*

PEOPLE OF DELAWARE,

ON THE

APPROACHING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION:

PREPARED

IN OBEDIENCE TO A RESOLUTION

OF THE

Convention of the Friends of the National Administration

ASSEMBLED AT DOVER,

ON THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF JULY, 1828.

547

ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE OF DELAWARE.

Fellow Citizens,

The convention of the friends of the Administration of the General Government, composed of one hundred and fifty Delegates from the several counties, held at Dover on the 15th instant, appointed us to prepare and publish, in their name, an address to the people of this State. In the discharge of that important duty, we humbly implore that divine Goodness, which has so often and so signally favoured this happy nation, to remove from us all bitterness towards our opponents, to give us to speak, fearlessly, but temperately, the language of truth, that if we be right and they be wrong, our bretheren may be drawn from the error of their ways, and be persuaded to unite with us in efforts for the good of our common Country.

Blind devotion to men in power has never characterised the People of the United States. They do not require to have inculcated upon them the maxim that 'men feel power and forget right.' The history of the sad misrule which, happily for us—happily for the world,—separated this Country from Great Britain, is too fresh in the recollection of Americans, for them easily to err by confiding too much in their public functionaries.

Salutary confidence and trust in future intelligence and uprightness of purpose, which former good conduct invites and justifies, is all that can be claimed for men in their private or public lives. This is all that is asked of the people, by the friends of the present Administration of the General Government. But surely it cannot be proper,—every honest man, whether of this or that party, must say it is unjustifiable,—to form combinations to oppose measures as they rise, be they right or wrong. An attempt has been made to vindicate an indiscriminate opposition to the measures of the present Administration, upon the ground that Congress, when voting by States, did not choose the candidate who had the highest number of electoral votes. Congress elected the President in the manner the Constitution directs. It was their duty to choose, from the three highest in vote, that individual whom they thought the most suitable and best qualified to be President:—and this they were bound, this they were sworn to do, without having any regard to the number of votes by which they were respectively

returned to the House. Can it be necessary to argue this matter to shew that a combination for opposition, founded upon this ground, is every way reprehensible? In Delaware, particularly, the advocates of this Doctrine, can never find favour; because it renders inoperative the very provision in the Constitution, which gives to the smaller States the only efficient influence they possess in the choice of a President. When the election, from a want of a majority for any one candidate for that high office, is brought to the House of Representatives, that body votes by States; and in settling this important question, the smallest State in the Union has as much weight as the largest.

It was not surprising that a party formed, in the open and avowed spirit of hostility to the Constitution, should be found capable of unjustly imputing wicked and corrupt motives to their opponents, and that the cry of bargain and sale in the election should have been sent through the land. That charge has been fully investigated, and has been proved, to the satisfaction of the people, to be entirely unfounded. The facts which are now established prove, most unhappily for the opposition, that all the attempts at corruption were made by the friends of General Jackson. Why was their candidate called upon to deny that he had determined, in the event of his election to the Presidency, to make Mr. Adams Secretary of State—why was he desired positively to declare that he would never appoint Mr. Adams to that office, if it were not intended by that declaration to win the support of the friends of Mr. Clay? The election of Mr. Adams to the Presidency, vacated, of course, the office of Secretary of State. To put General Jackson upon an equal footing, in this respect, his friends avowed that they were desirous he should be brought to say he would not continue Mr. Adams, as Secretary of State. What measures they adopted to accomplish this object, which, upon their own reasoning, was a corrupt one, does not appear. It is only known, and it is known by their own avowal, that they formed the corrupt purpose; and we are left to conjecture how far they proceeded to carry it into execution. Having determined upon an unfair and improper course themselves, it is not wonderful that they should have suspected others of being as easily led into an equal dereliction of duty: or, without any belief whatever in its existence, that they should have been capable of knowingly calumniating their opponents.

The Constitution permits the re-election of a President of the United States. Here, too, the opposition is wiser than the law. Our frame of Government has settled the principle, as well as the mode, of the choice by the House of Representatives. When the question of any proposed alteration in the Constitution is fairly before the States, for their adoption or rejection, every thing which can be urged for or against the proposed al-

iteration, is a proper subject for consideration. But men who, for selfish purposes of their own, call upon the people to disregard their own form of Government, in any one of its existing provisions, are utterly unworthy of trust. The rule of conduct prescribed by the Constitution every good citizen is bound to respect.

The people of the United States will never give their confidence to a party, or favour the pretensions of a Candidate, whose friends attempt to set up, for the rule of conduct, any other than that of the Constitution—who, taking advantage of the spirit of vigilance, which freemen ought to exercise over those in power, endeavour, for their own sinister purposes, to alienate the fair confidence and regard which are due to faithful public servants. The charge of the basest corruption has been laid before the people, and strictly examined, and found totally groundless. The wildest and most profligate extravagance, in the expenditure of the public money, having been again and again imputed to their opponents, a young and untrained member of their party, led no doubt to believe in the truth of the charge, called for the institution of a strict enquiry into this matter. Those who had spread the charge before the country, endeavoured to frown him into silence. The accusers shrunk from the maintenance of their own accusation, and the party accused demanded that the investigation should go on. It did go on, and it resulted, after the closest and severest scrutiny, in proving the strictest order and economy in the public expenditure.

The two leading parties which are now formed in this country, are at issue with each other, as to the expediency or in expediency of that great system of measures, which is emphatically termed the 'American System.'—The friends of the Administration, believing that the wealth and greatness of the United States, the happiness and prosperity of the people, depend upon the establishment and maintenance of that system, are its firm and zealous supporters. A very large proportion of the opposite party indulge themselves in the deadliest enmity to these measures. It is not our purpose to enter into an elaborate examination or vindication of this system. All that can be urged for or against it, is already before the people. The northern, the middle and the western States have adopted it, with scarcely a dissenting voice among their citizens; and it has already enlisted in its favour a good deal of the intelligence and virtue of the southern portion of the Union. To the friends of that system, it seems a question whether landed property and the products of our soil shall undergo a still greater depression, or be doubled, at least, in their present value—whether the people shall be ignorant and indigent—or intelligent enterprising, prosperous and independent. If the system, here referred to be as benificent in its effects as is insisted up-

on by its friends, it well deserves the great name it bears; and no good citizen will support a party whose efforts are directed against it. Independently, then, of the respective characters of the two great candidates, who are before the people for the Presidency of the Union, it seems to us that the question would be settled in favour of Mr. Adams, by the single consideration, that he belongs to the party whose measures are most likely to promote the public interest. There is too much intelligence among the citizens of the United States, to give any just cause to fear that a majority of them can be led off from a course their own prosperity requires them to pursue.

There are, however, involved in the great question before the States, considerations, if possible, of graver and weightier import. A country may be mistaken in the choice of its internal policy, and yet be turned back, by the light of experience, from the error of its measures, to the adoption of a wiser and more prudent course. But there are great leading principles of truth and virtue, which when a people venture to set at naught, it is not often permitted to them, without extreme national humiliation and suffering, to regain their former erectness of character. The lapse from virtue to vice may happen to a people collectively, as to the separate individuals that compose their community. Among the great obligations which freemen owe to themselves, is to entrust with their power, and reward with their favour, no individual whose private life has not given the strongest pledge of his being worthy of their confidence. When, in the selection of public functionaries, it shall be deemed unnecessary to inquire how far a man's life has been virtuous, high minded and honourable, the great securities for private virtue and public worth will be exposed to the highest peril. Dispense with this test of fitness for public employment, or let the people be led to hold it in light estimation, and the modes are innumerable, by which unprincipled and dangerous men, will win their way to the highest posts of honour. Smartness will claim the distinction which belongs to goodness; and brilliancy and not solidity of talent will only be in request. The morals of the people will be corrupted, and the wisdom of the government will be as folly. When such a time shall arrive among us—which may God, in his mercy and kindness keep far from us!—his moral government of the world can be vindicated only by our downfall. Let us then listen to the voice of all experience—let the pages of all history warn us—let the sacred volumes of our religion teach us—how a people may be lost or preserved. If careless of private worth, we shall be regardless of public virtue. If the violation of the duties of private life, are no bar to our confidence and trust, we shall soon learn to look, with complacency and indulgence, upon outrages committed against the most sacred of our public institutions. If there be any thing of truth and fitness in these

remarks, it cannot be wrong freely and closely to examine the pretensions of the two great candidates before the people, for the highest office within their gift.

The whole private life of John Quincy Adams is not only free from blemish, but stands conspicuous for sobriety, command of temper, republican simplicity of manners, unrelaxing diligence, the most extended charity and uniform piety. His public life has given proof to the world of the most distinguished talents, and the utmost devotedness to the cause of his country. From all those who have been highest in the confidence of the citizens of the United States—Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe—we have the most unqualified testimony in his favour: and the age in which he has lived has heretofore delighted, with one voice, to award him the meed of virtue and wisdom. Allow us here to incorporate into our address, only two sentences from the Newhampshire patriot of 1820—at present the leading Jackson paper in New England. “THE MORE WE CONTEMPLATE THE CHARACTER OF THIS ABLE, ASSIDUOUS AND EXCELLENT STATESMAN AND PATRIOT—THE FURTHER WE WITNESS HIS PROGRESS, IN THE DIPLOMATIC HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY, THE MORE WE SEE TO ADMIRE AND APPLAUD. NO MAN UNITES MORE OF THE QUALITIES OF THE HONEST, UPRIGHT AND ABLE STATESMAN, THAN JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.”

The same paper, speaking of General Jackson, four years afterwards, that is on the 31st of May, 1824, observed ‘HE (GENERAL JACKSON) IS, IN NO RESPECT, QUALIFIED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.’ We might go on and quote the former opinions of those who are now, in our own State, his leading and most influential advocates; all going to show him “the most unsafe and unfitting man in the nation for public trust and confidence.” We might follow up these quotations and produce evidence from the lips of those who have since become his most strenuous advocates, in every part of the Union, to prove the same unfitness and incapacity. These have been laid before the people again and again. Indeed, if we were to permit ourselves to quote against General Jackson the gross and vulgar, indecent and profane terms applied to him four years back, by some of the most prominent in his party, we should offend against good manners. If we were disposed to surrender ourselves up to the utmost bitterness of vituperation, we could use no language which would not fall infinitely short of their then severe philippics against this their present “*second Washington!*”—this their now “*Hero of two wars!*”

If General Jackson's private life had been entirely faultless, and his public character free from those blemishes which he, himself, has brought upon it—if the laurels gathered by him at New Orleans, had been fresh and untarnished, the citizens of

the United States would never have placed in the highest civil post in the Government, an illiterate man and an inexperienced statesman. They would never have ventured upon so hazardous an experiment to themselves, nor have set so dangerous an example to posterity. The victory of New Orleans was an important one. Its magnitude cannot be overrated. The nation has awarded to General Jackson, a full share of the glory it gained upon that occasion: and in its delight to honour him for that service, it has almost forgotten what was due to its other functionaries, and even to the citizens and soldiers, who, under him, achieved that victory. The friends of General Jackson seem desirous of throwing into dark and distant perspective all the other illustrious instances of consummate skill and distinguished gallantry, by sea and by land, which gave, during the late war, so high a character to the national prowess. The triumph over the "invincibles of Wellington," in the open field, with bayonet to bayonet—the naval victories on Lake Erie and Lake Champlain—and the immortal honour gained by our flag in every sea, are all forgotten, that this citizen soldier may wear a chaplet of unrivalled brightness. This the people of the United States will never endure—it would be to give up too large a portion of the national glory. They will cherish with even more distinguished notice, their other Heroes, because *their* private and *their* public lives have done equal honour to themselves and their country. Distinguished as was the victory of New Orleans—and we are willing to give it an importance which has scarcely been claimed for it, as frustrating under Providence, a scheme of perfidy in the enemy which will ever be a blot on the character of Great Britain—the achievements of our Naval Heroes and our gallant tars, rescuing our flag from the humiliation it had undergone, in the unhappy affair of the Chesapeake, and giving to our star-spangled banner to shine with unrivalled brilliancy and glory, on every sea and in every harbour, are more precious in the estimation of every genuine American, and have more truly illustrated the character of our country, than a hundred such victories as that of New Orleans. The measure of our nation's honour was full and overflowing, when the battles of the lakes came, almost with the fascination of romance, guided by the youthful heroes, whose names will forever live in the story of our country, to give the proof that, ship to ship, or fleet to fleet, we need fear no enemy; and that the people of this broad spread and rising empire, while they are true to themselves, and animated by the noble examples now set them, may go in safety and honour to every part of the world, or dwell at home in peace and independence. Our ocean shore of a thousand leagues is girt as with a wall—and our noble rivers and our inland seas, are alive with the song and the sail of the mariner.

Was it not enough to satisfy General Jackson, that the country assigned him his place among the heroes of the nation? Was it not sufficient that the people were willing that the mantle of oblivion should be thrown over private errors and public transgressions, which no victory could redeem, which no trophy could hide? General Jackson should not have suffered others to thrust him forward into a situation, where sacred duty to the public rendered it imperiously necessary to strip from him this mantle. It was, indeed, a wretched miscalculation upon the character of the people of this country, that they would be so dazzled by the splendour of a single victory, as to be incapable of examining closely and clearly into his pretensions for trust in the highest civil employment in their gift. With a full and perfect knowledge of his unfitness for civil office, and of the multiplied transgressions of his private and public duty—proclaimed with their own lips, from the house-tops, to the people—they have committed a great crime against their country, and justly forfeited, themselves, all right to fair consideration, in dragging *him* forward as a candidate for its highest honours.

The great security for the continuance of our republic is to be found in the frame of our government, and in the character of the citizens of the United States. The constitution was formed and adopted at a time peculiarly favourable to calm and careful deliberation. It was the work of the best and ablest men in our country; and came to us under the sanction, and with the earnest recommendation, of Washington, the most illustrious patriot the world has ever seen. It contains every provision necessary for the safeguard of our religious rights and civil liberties. The people have only to hold every public functionary to the strictest observance of its injunctions, and to trust no man who shall be hardy enough to commit upon it the slightest violation: and the great truth which has now gone forth to the world that “man is capable of governing himself,” will be sustained, to the total overthrow of the false and degrading doctrine, which it has suited the lordlings of the earth to preach up and inculcate, that man is too weak and impotent a creature to do without a master. Gracious God! need we fear that the time has already come—at the end, too, of the first half century, during which so much has been done to illustrate and establish this great, this noble truth—that we are to give it up, as a splendid but hopeless illusion? The time has come—yes, it has already arrived—if the citizens of the United States, recreants to the cause of liberty, can regard with base submission and apathy the open violation of their sacred charter;—and, if, in the fair temple of their freedom, they can raise their voices and sing Hosannas to the guilty violater, they have made it the great sepulchre of their country. Need we advance to the proof that General Jackson is that guilty violater? We ask you

to spread before you the great charter of your liberties, and to place your finger upon the most efficient and emphatic provision for their security. You refer us to the *habeas corpus*; the same institution to which the immortal Washington, in some of the portraits of the father of his country, is seen pointing, and seems as if he would say, 'preserve but this, my beloved countrymen, from unhallowed touch, and your liberties are safe.' And yet Andrew Jackson has twice trampled this under his feet; not merely refusing—which was never ventured upon before, either in Great Britain or this country—to yield it the promptest obedience, but dragging to a prison the bearers of the sacred symbol.

It is not our intention to go into a detailed enumeration of General Jackson's transgressions; but we ask you to select the next most prominent feature in your Government. You refer us to the arrangement to preserve the independence and integrity of the States, within the spheres marked out for them to occupy. The violence which Cromwell committed upon the Parliament of England when, stamping his foot on the floor, he ordered them to depart—which the soldier Napoleon exercised toward the council of five hundred, when he put them out from their place of assembling, at the point of the bayonet—the soldier Jackson had the hardihood to imitate, so far as to lock up the legislative hall of one State, the State of Louisiana, and to inhibit the representatives of the people from re-assembling,—and to say to Mr. Rabun, the Governour of another independent State, the State of Georgia—*"You, Sir, as Governour of a State, within my military district, have no right to give a military order whilst I am in the field."*

Shall we ask you still to look again into this charter, and to inform us in what you believe consists the greatest power it confers, and where that power is deposited. You have no difficulty in saying that it is the power vested in the President and Congress to raise armies and make war. Both these powers, this reckless soldier has ventured to usurp and exercise. He has raised an army, created offices and filled them. He has made war, not only upon his own authority and in violation of the constitution, but in open and direct disobedience of the orders of his own Government.

The constitution has made the President commander in chief of the Army and Navy of the United States. General Jackson has exercised this power independently of the President, and forbidden obedience to the orders of his Government, unless issued through him. The President ordered his army to be discharged. He refused to obey the order—still kept his men in service, even beyond the period for which they were drafted—and caused six innocent men to be shot to death, for doing what they had a right to do—returning home when the period of their service had expired.

When to this guilty catalogue of great sins against the constitution, we add the ruthless manner in which he waged a war of extermination against the poor, unhappy aborigines of our country, putting to death, in cold blood, men, women and children—and the story of the dark and dismal despotism of his sad misrule in Florida:—and when we remind you of his threat to the President, that he would burn up one of the officers of the Government, in the house belonging to the people of the United States, we are lost in amazement to think that the author of those outrages is still before the States, and seriously supported by a formidable party for the highest post in the Government. The frenzied zeal of so many misguided citizens, in making an Idol of this man, who has committed so many flagrant trespasses on the laws and constitution of his country—who, to use their own former language, has violated almost every law, human and divine—must be curbed by the united efforts of the good and sane portion of our country, or our liberties are gone. Rather than that our civil liberties and religious rights should perish, we would join in the prayer that if we have offended against God, he would send upon us for our chastisement, the pestilence and the famine; and agree that any affliction will be light compared with the loss of our freedom.

The reign of Jackson has been truly a reign of terror—ferocious, merciless and bloody. And is this man of violence, with a heart of stone, and a temper constantly working itself into fury, fitted to sit in the President's chair, and execute justice in mercy? If *he* is to be our President, let us blot out from our constitution the noblest feature of our own and every Government—the power to pardon—for he will find no occasion to exercise it. Let our laws, like those of Draco, be written in characters of blood; and the experiment be fully made, whether Americans, in an age more tender in the infliction of capital punishment, than any that has gone before it, are willing to present themselves to the world, as pre-eminent—regardless of human life. If the citizens of the United States can bear, themselves, such a reign as this—and all on account of the victory at New Orleans—it will be well for them to inquire, what security they will have for that respect to public law to which the present civilized world requires implicit obedience, with a man at the head of their Government, who knows not the difference between a *pirate* and a *prisoner at war*—who knows how a pirate is to be punished, but knows not how he is to be tried.

In referring to the offences of General Jackson against the laws and constitution of his country, and the constituted authorities of our Government, we have omitted any notice of the violence that he threatened, and advanced to the Capitol to carry into execution, on the persons of members of Congress; of which, while we write, the evidence of Mr. Lacock is laid

before us. That a man who can trample upon the constitution, and violate its most sacred provisions, over and over again, can coolly resolve to cut off the ears of members of Congress, for venturing in discharge of their duty to investigate his conduct, can be matter of no surprise. It is in strict keeping with his other misdeeds. What security has the country that he would not, if President, and made commander in chief of its armies, follow out fully the example of his great predecessors, Cromwell and Bonaparte—march his soldiers to the Capitol and expel Congress at the point of the bayonet? If, fellow-citizens, with such earnest before your eyes of what we may expect, you elevate this man to the Presidency, you will be prepared to vote him first Consul for life and afterwards Emperor.

One of the reasons, assigned by your convention, for deprecating the election of General Jackson to the Presidency is, that as a public Ambassador, he caused to be appended to a public treaty a grant of land for his own aggrandisement. That stipulation was in the following words. *‘Wishing to give a national mark of gratitude to Major General Andrew Jackson, for his distinguished services rendered us, at the head of the army from Tennessee, &c’ (the said Indian nation) ‘give and grant him, and his heirs for ever, THREE MILES SQUARE OF LAND, at such place as he may select out of the national lands.’* This was equal to five thousand seven hundred and sixty acres, and, if judiciously located, would have been worth, at this time five hundred thousand dollars. There have been instances in *Europe*, where princes have conferred upon foreign ministers, on their taking leave, some small token of respect and courtesy. Upon one occasion—we think it was the case of Colonel Humphreys—a present, perhaps of a sword, was made to him. That gentleman submitted the matter to Congress, who directed it should be returned. We believe we should be warranted in saying that, if an estimate could be made of the aggregate of all the presents of this description, of all the Potentates of *Europe*, from the earliest age down to this day, the amount would fall infinitely short, in value, of this Indian gift to General Jackson. What citizen is there, of either party, who can look at this transaction without the most marked indignation? A public Minister, sent to transact the public business—well paid for his services by his own Government—and transmitting, with the treaty he negotiated, a stipulation for his own aggrandisement! It has no parallel in the annals of the civilized world! A free gift of a nation of wretched, half starved Indians, brought to his feet in unconditional submission! Were they prompted directly or indirectly, by General Jackson, to make him this grant? Was it a reward to him for the services he had rendered them, in bringing into their country the fire, the famine and the sword? Or was it an offering from the ignorance and superstition of the poor children of the forest, to

propitiate him as their evil genius—to soften his heart and avert his wrath? What terms of reprobation are strong enough to express the abhorrence of every honest man at such a transaction! This is a specimen of his fitness and talents for civil employment. As a soldier, we see him deliver himself up to his fiery passions, and his sword thirsting for the blood of friend and foe. As a civilian, the gross and grovelling spirit of cupidity takes hold of him. In the one situation, no feeling of mercy enters his heart:—and, in the other, no moral sense of decency and honour can curb his rapacity.

Our State has been flooded with handbills entitled '*General Jackson's land speculations*;' in which an attempt is made to explain and gloss over a series of circumstances, any one of which, in a citizen of this state, would have wrecked his character forever. We would have thrown this into the mass of offences, which we have passed over, had not the plastic hands of his apologists endeavoured to convert a most reprehensible transaction, into a pattern of generous liberality. A candidate for the Presidency obliged to have a white-washing committee, whose composition peels off almost as fast as it is put on! A judge of a court—for such was General Jackson, at the time—to take a fee of ten thousand acres of land to '*have*' so simple a matter accomplished, as the foreclosure of a mortgage! This suit, he instituted in the court of the United States of that district; which court had no jurisdiction of the cause. A decree of foreclosure is obtained—the eighty five thousand acres of land sold, and purchased for less than two thousand dollars, by General Jackson and company. Sales are afterwards made to settlers, by the purchasers, on general warranty deeds, which, in Tennessee, at that time, rendered the grantors liable for the improved value. When it was discovered that the court of the United States had no jurisdiction of the case, and that the decree there rendered was erroneous, the General and his partners became alarmed for the probable consequences of their covenants of warranty. At this moment it occurred to General Jackson that he had an old debt, of about twenty thousand dollars, due him from the estate of the mortgagor, who had died insolvent, in Georgia, where his heirs resided. To that state he proceeded forthwith, to purchase the equity of redemption of those heirs, for this old debt barred by the statute of limitations. He accomplished this without considering that the estate of the insolvent mortgagor was bound, beyond its utmost value, for unbarred debts—and without reflecting that the time for prosecuting a writ of error, to reverse the decree of foreclosure, having elapsed, the sale under the mortgage, altho' originally erroneous, had now become valid, by lapse of time. His purchase of the heirs could have availed not a cent, if the time for prosecuting the writ of error had not passed by. It would have been only a fund in his hands for the payment of good and subsisting debts. He

has thus committed two blunders—one in *having* the suit brought in the wrong court—the other in buying from the heirs what they had no right to sell, and what, of course, was of no value. But he resolves to make ‘the thorn bring forth figs.’ He turns upon his partners and his employers—claims, first, to stand in the place of the mortgagor, and tenders the payment of the mortgage money. He can now save himself from liability, under his own covenants of warranty—and the rest of the land, with all the improvements upon it, is to be his—and he is perfectly reckless of the ruin of his partners and employers. He comes, however, afterwards, to the determination to be contented with the payment of his debt of twenty thousand dollars, barred by the statute of limitations. He finds, in a Mr Erwin, the representative of his original employer, a man more knowing and as unyielding as himself. He contends in vain, with this gentleman for years. To protract the controversy with him, is to jeopardise his claim on the settlers. He had better take half than lose all. Erwin shaken off from his skirts, he finds no difficulty in obtaining from the settlers ten thousand dollars for this idle and unfounded claim—not for himself, but for his near relative James Jackson. He has, for this free and unpurchased relinquishment to Erwin, not only the inducement of getting one half of his unjust claim, when he was in peril of losing all—but the time, 1823, had arrived, when his evil star had brought him before the people, as a Candidate for the Presidency. The sorry story of this land speculation might take wind—and Erwin held the fatal scissors to clip the wings of his soaring ambition. Neither Erwin nor wife will come to him, and he must go to them,—that his friends hereafter might white-wash this transaction, by holding up to the people his gratuitous renunciation, to shew that ‘the gallant defender of New Orleans, was not proof to a woman’s tears and distress; when, in fact there was not a sigh heaved, nor a tear shed; for Mrs. Erwin, could have had no inducement for attempting to excite his commiseration. It is true there were, under the roof of each settler, upon these lands, women who could implore and shed tears, as eloquently as Mrs. Erwin. To them it was evident he exhibited no compassion, and it is equally clear that he could not have been a stranger to their distresses. It is bad enough to see bold and flagrant transgressions—but to be called upon to laud them to the skies, as instances of God-like virtue, is beyond human patience to endure.

There is another great land concern of the General which our duty to the Convention will not permit us to pass over without notice. The affair of the mortgage already discussed, was a private land speculation, and serves to show the principles which have guided him, in his transactions as a citizen. It does, indeed, go further, and establishes great official mis-

conduct, in having—he being a judge at the time—any thing to do, for fee or reward, with the carrying on of a suit, in a State where he held that situation. The grant of a tract of land three miles square, which General Jackson managed to extort from the Creek Indians, was an enormous offence against his country and the honour and purity of an ambassador; one, certainly, without a parallel in the history of diplomacy, except in the fresh instance to which we now refer. He was sent by the President, with Governour Shelby, of Kentucky, to negotiate a treaty of cession, with the Chickasaw nation of Indians. Here he accomplished an arrangement by which—but for the prudence and virtuous firmness of his colleague—his near relative, the same James Jackson, would have been made worth, at least, half a million of dollars. The old Governour, unmoved by the hectoring violence of the General, pertinaciously insisted that a stipulation in behalf of the United States should be incorporated with the arrangement, by which they became entitled to take the purchased property at the same price—twenty thousand dollars—which James Jackson was to pay for it. The Government, without hesitation, took it at this price: and, of course, what was intended for private emolument, became public property. Governour Shelby always believed, and so said, that General Jackson's corruption, in that negociation, had cost the United States from one to two hundred thousand dollars.* Thus we find that General Jackson, yield-

* *The following is an extract of a letter from the son of Governour Shelby, dated Grassland, April 28th, 1828.*

“My father set out on the 10th September, 1818, and arrived at General Jackson's on the 15th, where he remained a few days, and, in company with his colleague, proceeded to Nashville. In a day or two we set out for the treaty ground, accompanied by eight or ten gentlemen, friends of General Jackson, with all of whom (excepting Col. Butler,) my father was unacquainted. During the journey, little was said on the subject of the treaty. I heard the general, on one occasion, ask my father how high he was willing to go for the Indian boundary. My father replied, that he was prepared to go as high as \$300,000, rather than not effect the purchase—but, said he, ‘General Jackson, I have not the least idea that we shall find it necessary to give half that sum.’ After this conversation, a profound silence was observed by General Jackson and the friends who accompanied him, on the subject of the treaty, in my father's presence. At length, we arrived at the treaty ground—the Indians assembled. My father soon observed great intercourse between the General's friends and the Indians, of which he spoke frequently to me. On one occasion, the General and a part of his suite were absent from camp all night—the General withheld the motive of his nocturnal visit from his

ing to the utmost rapaciousness, has, in the inordinate pursuit of his land speculations—in one instance, violated his duty as

colleague, by studied silence on the subject. I did understand, by some means, that the General passed the night with Colbert, one of the principal Chiefs. My father expressed to me his suspicions 'that there was something not right going on.' Before any Council had convened, the General informed his colleague, 'that some of the principal Chiefs were violently opposed to selling land, and that those fellows would have to be bought over.' At length, a council was called. Among other objections made by the Indians to the selling of their land, it was urged by them 'that the United States was largely in arrears to them, and until old debts were paid, they would not contract new ones.' The Commissioners found it necessary to send to Nashville for money to pay those claims, and thus remove the main difficulty. In about a week, the messenger to Nashville arrives—the money is distributed agreeably to the census of the nation taken during his absence. A second council is convened. General Jackson inquires of the Chiefs,

'What do you ask for this land?'

Interpreter—'We don't know—what will you give?'

General Jackson—'We will give you \$150,000.'

Interpreter—'We can't take it.'

General Jackson—'We will give you \$200,000.'

Interpreter—'No, we cannot take it.'

General Jackson—'We will give you \$250,000.'

Interpreter—'No, no.' '\$300,000,' says the General.

My father left the table, and the council broke up. The General observed to my father, in conversation, that the Chiefs contended for the privilege of selling a large reservation of land to whom they might think proper. My father objected to this proposition: he said, 'they might sell to the King of England.' The General observed, 'that there was then a company of gentlemen on the ground that would pay them down their price, '\$20,000.' My father refused positively to permit the Indians to sell land to private individuals. He contended that the Government should have the option of taking the reservation at the price stipulated, and the General and the Chiefs were, in the end, obliged to consent to it.

My father told the General that he had made the Indians offers that he could not sanction. 'Why, Governour, God damn it, did you not say that you would give \$300,000?' 'No; sir; I gave you no authority to speak for me, I am hear to speak for myself.' 'Why, Governour, God damn my soul, if you did not say so.' 'I did not authorize you to make any such proposition.' The parties seemed on the very point of coming to blows, when I stepped between them, laying a hand on each, and entreated them to talk the matter over more dispassionately.

a Judge and a citizen—and in two other instances, prostituted the sacred character of an ambassador. We sicken at the recital of such flagrant offences, and loath all further comment on them.

There has been, heretofore, but one sentiment in this country, as to Colonel Burr's expedition—and that feeling has consigned, unhesitatingly, to lasting infamy, every citizen that had the slightest participation in it. The proof that implicates General Jackson in that conspiracy, is thickening against him every moment; and has, perhaps, become irrefutable. The evidence, so far as it has yet been developed, establishes a double treachery—treachery to his country—treachery to his conspirators.

That a man of General Jackson's temperament and recklessness of character should make a successful appeal to a certain class of society, is not extraordinary. There have been in every age, and among every people, enough of turbulence and violence to render such an appeal formidable. But when the restless and dangerous agencies of this description are invoked and accredited, by any considerable body of respectable citizens, the crisis becomes truly alarming. That those, from whom their country had a right to expect better things, should, in the selection of their candidate and in the concoction of their party, have based themselves upon this calculation, and the prone-

My father told me afterwards, that it was well for the old rascal that I interfered, that he should have knocked him twenty feet. Not a word passed between the commissioners until next day, when the General broke out on his colleague in a strain, if possible, more rough and boisterous than before. I again stepped between them, and called on the friends of the General to interfere. Old Major Smith stepped up and observed, 'Gentlemen, I am no dictator, but I will be moderator,' and we kept them apart. My father told the General he should leave him and go home.' 'Go, Governour,' replied the General, 'by God I will make the treaty without you.' While our horses were saddling, the friends of the General urged me to use my influence with my father not to go. He at length agreed to remain. Another council was called. The Indians demanded the \$300,000, and would treat for nothing less—finally, the treaty was made. My father thought that Gen. Jackson's corruption and folly had cost the Government from 100,000 to 200,000 dollars. His mind underwent no change on this subject to the day of his death.

I have thus given you a detail of facts, which came under my own observation: you are at liberty to make what use of it you may think proper. Your friend,

THO. H. SHELBY.

Colonel C. S. TODD.

ness of the unenlightened to be dazzled by military glory, as the foundations of their strength, must be matter of deep and humbling concern to every upright and intelligent citizen. Notwithstanding the guilty ambition of these men, none know better than themselves that, when the united efforts of such an association as this have been crowned with success, and a party thus formed has mounted into power, there immediately ensues a struggle between those who are prepared to go all lengths in the said misrule of affairs, and such as are disposed to a more orderly course; and that this struggle has never yet failed to terminate in the destruction of those who are desirous of maintaining the wholesome restraints of society. These are, however, determined to assist in raising the whirlwind, and they must be the very first to perish in it. Enquire who are openly preaching up treason, and unfurling the banners of rebellion—who are demanding a severance of the Union,—and you will learn that none but the friends of General Jackson are engaged in this goodly work. That the leaders of this band will turn back upon their steps, we have no hope. Our reliance is upon the general intelligence, good sense and virtue of the people: they will not follow in the train of such desperate politicians.

We, perhaps, ought not to close this address without noticing the attempt which is making, with so much industry, to persuade the people that the Administration has lost the colonial trade, and that this has occasioned the fall in the price of grain. We will not occupy your time by a detailed history of the facts in relation to this subject—they are contained in the able and luminous reports and Documents which have been from time to time laid before Congress by the Executive. They are now before the people and prove to the satisfaction of every intelligent citizen and sensible merchant, that the Administration has saved the country from an arrangement, by which the most substantial commercial and agricultural interests would have been jeopardised. If there be truth in the custom house returns, our colonial trade has been increased since these gentlemen say it was 'lost.'

We should trespass too much on your time, fellow-citizens, if we were to attempt a detailed examination of the measures of the present Administration. You have seen a 'combination' entered into at the commencement of the Administration, to oppose its measures—and, we may say truly, to oppose those measures, whether they were right or wrong. Would such a combination have passed unnoticed a single false step in the Executive? And what has this sharp-sighted and vindictive inquest—determined to be satisfied with nothing—yet laid before the public as the great sins of this Administration? Corruption? The charge has recoiled upon themselves. For men to talk of corruption, who are so far gone in it themselves, as

to declare they would keep up and persist in their opposition to the Government, if it were as 'pure as the Angels that stand at the right hand of the throne of God!'—Extravagance in the expenditure of public money? Let their own waste and extravagance—their own improper conduct at the last session of Congress, in making the legislative halls a great electioneering arena, where every public object was lost sight of but one—that of securing the election of their military chief—let this be taken into view, and it would greatly exceed any thing which they might call the mis-expenditure of this and every preceding Administration. But what single mis-expenditure have they found out against the present government? They have, when called upon to make good their charges against it and when forced, against their will, into the examination, after ransacking every department, failed to establish the slightest instance of disregard to strict economy in the public expenditure. Have they proved any thing to be wrong in the appointments to office, or in the diplomacy of the Executive? They have set in council themselves upon all of the nominations, and have consented to and advised the greater part of the appointments. As to the mission to the southern republics, which has been the theme of such heated controversy, some of the leading members in the opposition declared at the time, in the course of good natured conversation with the friends of the Administration, 'had you taken the opposite course, and refused to respond to the call of your sister republics, we would have put you with ease to the wall.' Has the arm of public defence been withered, or in any respect been enfeebled during this Administration? It is not pretended that it has. Have measures for future security, by sea or by land, been relaxed? Nobody charges it. Where then are the great sins of this Administration? Its greatest fault is that it is faultless—that it wears an armour these gentlemen cannot pierce. Their great reliance is upon their arts of deception, by which they hope to blind and mislead the people—and the illusive hopes of better prices, with which they endeavour to amuse them. There is more intelligence in the country than these gentlemen calculate upon. A war in Europe—the rest of the civilized world in strife, while we are at peace—is known to the least enlightened citizen among us, to give wider spread to the wings of our commerce, and to afford fresh life and spirit to our agriculture. When, however, angry nations have exhausted their fury towards each other—when the blessings of peace come to make up to them for the ravages of war; when the sword is exchanged for the sickle and the ploughshare, does it become us as a Christian people, to grieve that the further effusion of human blood is stayed, or to murmur that we have no longer hosts of fierce and hungry soldiers to feed? Instead of desiring, like vultures, to fatten on the distresses and calamities of others, ought we not rather to offer up

our fervent thanksgivings to God that he placed the lot of our forefathers, and our own, far remote from scenes of wild havoc, and to implore his goodness to prosper those efforts of our government which are directed to the developement of our own native sources of virtue, industry and enterprise? Our adversaries may descant as wildly and fiercely as they please about what they call their RIGHTS, but when they unfurl the banners of rebellion—when they call upon the citizens of the United States to rally around the standard of a military chief, who, upon all occasions, tramples under his feet the sacred charter of our liberties—when they oppose with headlong fury and violence, every measure calculated to establish the firm and solid foundations of permanent comfort and prosperity for the people—there is too much good sense—too much virtue—in the country, to heed their noisy and senseless clamour. Their ‘tree will be judged by its fruit.’ As yet every blossom it has borne is blighted, and its product, even if it could, in this soil, ripen into maturity, would be unseemly to the eye and bitter to the taste.

We have now, fellow-citizens, nearly performed the task assigned us. We ask leave only to remark on the inconsistency of our opponents; who, blowing hot and cold with the same breath, represent General Jackson as a candidate of the Federalists or of the Democrats, as they address themselves to those who were formerly of this or that party. It has suited these gentlemen in Delaware to ordain and publish to the world the downfall of the old parties. How many of the turbulent and violent of each party have enlisted under their banners, we leave it to others to say. We have the satisfaction to believe that the greater part of the moderate and reflecting, cool and dispassionate members of the community are arrayed with the friends of the Administration; and we are firmly of opinion that the present organization of parties will be permanent.

We cannot take leave of this subject without remarking upon the entire indelicacy of General Jackson becoming the calumniator of his rival candidate. For the first time, in the history of our country, has a candidate for the Presidency travelled through any portion of the Union, spreading charges far and wide against his competitor. What single letter has Mr. Adams written, what syllable has he uttered to the prejudice of General Jackson? The friends of Mr. Adams have done what their duty to themselves and the government called upon them to do: they have met and repelled the charges of his great accuser. Those charges have recoiled upon their author. They have examined with freedom into the pretensions of the gentleman who challenges so boldly for himself the highest honours of the country. Much would have been spared to Gen. Jackson if, after cordially, to all appearances, felicitating Mr. Adams on his election—instead of immediately becoming his

open and secret accuser, he had retired in peace and quietness to his Hermitage, bowed in submission to the public will, and acquiesced cheerfully in the supremacy of the law and constitution of his country. He could, it is true, have had no exemption in any case from a full enquiry into his fitness for the highest office to which his inordinate ambition had tempted him to aspire; and that enquiry could never have resulted favourably to his hopes. As matters now stand, he is doubly proved unworthy of the confidence of the people of the United States.

In respect to Mr. Clay, we know not that we can add force to the sentiment expressed by your convention when they say "that if there has been among us, since the days of the immortal Washington, an individual who deserved to be the first in the confidence and the affections of his countrymen, it is Henry Clay; that able and upright statesman, to whom the President, obeying the voice of the people, has assigned the most distinguished situation in his councils." Yet this is the man whom General Jackson singled out, to aim at his fair fame and reputation the most poisoned shafts—not putting him up as a target among his family and friends, at the Hermitage, around his own fire side, as he would have us to believe; but indulging himself in this cruel and wanton sport, at every other fire side, in every Steam-boat and at every Inn. What are we to think, as has been justly observed, of the morals of him who holds not the reputation of others sacred, at home as well as abroad? And what are we to think of General Jackson, as a man, who urging this lame and impotent apology, stands proved to the world as the persevering and unwearied propagator of the same slander in every other situation? Mr. Clay came to the councils of the nation, with all that spirit of freshness and freedom—with all that genius and talent—with all that openness and goodness of heart and frankness of manners which made him—if we may say so—but the harbinger of still brighter times in the west—but the earnest as it were, of what that noble portion of our country is destined to yield to the common stock of the moral worth and greatness of our empire. Who can believe that such a man as this has fallen, and fallen, too, where there was no temptation to betray?

Fellow-citizens, we have done. We leave your own cause in your own hands. We ask you to join with us, in humble supplications to the author of all goodness, to continue still to guide this young and rising nation—to give our citizens to know and perform their duty to their God and their country—that they may be an example worthy to be held up for virtue and piety, and true patriotism, to man in every clime and country—that he may purge them of all bitterness and uncharitableness towards each other;—to ordain that turbulence and violence shall not set up their misrule in our land—that the noble fabric of

our Government shall be preserved—that the ark of our safety and glory shall float securely and ride triumphantly amid the fierce and threatening storms now gathering to overwhelm and sink with it the last hope of the friends of freedom.

DAVID HAZZARD,
MOSES BRADFORD,
WILLIAM H. WELLS,
ALEXANDER CRAWFORD,
ISAAC DAVIS,
CALEB S. LAYTON,
GEORGE B. RODNEY,
SAMUEL S. GRUBB,
JOHN ROBERTSON.

August 1, 1828.

FINIS.



WERT BOOKBINDING

JAN 1989

Grantville, PA

